



# CITY OF HOUSTON

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## Mobile Food Service Units

Obtaining a mobile food unit medallion can be complicated or relatively simple depending on your understanding of the requirements, procedures and policies. Please read and understand the following document to assure that you have all of the necessary information. If after reading this document, you have any remaining or additional questions, please call the Houston Health Department for assistance.

### I. DEFINITIONS AND PERMIT CLASSIFICATIONS FOR MOBILE FOOD UNITS.

**Mobile Food Unit.** Mobile food unit means a food service establishment that is designed to be readily movable or a food cart that is movable and maneuverable by one person when the unit is fully loaded and is operated at a fixed location. All mobile food units are classified as either restricted or unrestricted service based on how food is handled on the unit. A restricted mobile food unit serves no food other than food that was prepared and packaged in individual servings at an approved commissary. All other mobile food units are classified as unrestricted. All mobile food service unit operators must obtain an individual medallion (\$310.00) for each mobile food service unit and unrestricted, conventional mobile food units must also pay an electronic monitoring system fee (\$200.00). A pre-opening inspection fee (\$50.00) is required for all new and "new to Houston" unrestricted mobile food units. Payments may be made by check, money order, cashier's check or in cash. Temporary checks are not accepted. Medallions expire one year from the effective day/date of the medallion. All mobile food units are classified according to the design of the unit and how food is handled as follows:

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Unit.** A truck or trailer limited to serving only prepackaged foods from approved sources that require no further preparation except warming for immediate service. These units may also dispense non-potentially hazardous beverages from protected equipment. Restricted conventional mobile food units are commonly known as cold trucks. These units operate on private property at one or more locations, except that trucks or other vehicles exclusively selling packaged ice cream products may operate on city streets or sidewalks. These units must also be able to demonstrate mobility.
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Unit.** An enclosed truck or trailer preparing or serving food that is not prepackaged or does not meet the requirements for a restricted conventional mobile food unit. Unrestricted conventional mobile food units must utilize the services of an approved commissary on a daily basis. These units operate on private property at one or more locations except that trucks or vehicles exclusively serving or selling ice cream products may operate on city streets or sidewalks. These units must also be able to demonstrate mobility.
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Unit.** A mobile food unit limited in size and service serving only prepackaged foods from approved sources that require no further preparation except warming for immediate service. These units may also dispense non-potentially hazardous beverages from protected equipment. These units are limited to operation on the premises of a licensed food establishment that serves as the commissary for the unit or to a specific assigned location in a City of Houston park.
- D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Unit.** A mobile food unit limited in size and service serving food that is not prepackaged or does not meet the requirements for a restricted fixed location mobile food unit. Unrestricted fixed location mobile food units must operate from an approved, on-site commissary on a daily basis. These units are limited to operation on the premises of a licensed food establishment that serves as the commissary for the unit or to a specific assigned location in a City of Houston park.

### II. GENERAL INFORMATION.

Mobile food units are not movable restaurants. Because facilities are extremely limited, food preparation is restricted. Not all foods are suitable for mobile food units. Requirements are based on the menu and preparation procedures on the mobile food unit. A definite menu must be set. Design requirements of the mobile food unit vary with the type of food (potentially hazardous or non-potentially hazardous) and whether the food is packaged or not. All mobile food units are evaluated, inspected and permitted on an individual basis. Restricted operations mobile food units are not required to submit plans and specifications. All new or extensively remodeled operations for unrestricted mobile food units require complete review of plans and specifications. Changes of ownership or changes to an unrestricted unit may require review of plans and specifications. The plan review pre-operational inspection fee is \$35.00 and is payable when plans and specifications are submitted for review.

### III. COMMISSARIES.

The commissary, or base of operations, is an essential part of a mobile unit's operation. All mobile food units must operate from a commissary or other licensed food establishment where food and supplies are received. All unrestricted conventional mobile food units must return to the commissary at least once during the preceding 24 hours of operation for the performance of all servicing operations. All unrestricted fixed location mobile food units must return to the commissary at least once per day of operation for the performance of all servicing operations unless alternate arrangements have been approved by the Houston Health Department. An unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit operating exclusively in an enclosed area may utilize other means to fill water tanks and to drain and flush wastewater tanks if approved by the Houston Health Department. Upon request, the operator of a mobile food unit other than a restricted operations mobile food unit must be able to provide written proof that the mobile food unit has been serviced at an approved commissary on a daily basis. These servicing

records must be maintained in duplicate, with one copy kept in the mobile food unit and the other copy at the commissary used by the mobile food unit. Each servicing record must be kept and maintained for one year from the date of servicing. Failure to obtain servicing on a daily basis or failure to maintain servicing records may result in the immediate closure of the mobile food unit operations and the issuance of court citations. The commissary for any mobile food unit must be constructed and operated in compliance with the requirements of section 20.21 of the food code. The requirements for the commissary may vary according to the type of mobile food unit or units being serviced.

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Commissaries serving only restricted conventional mobile food units must provide a servicing area for supplying and maintaining the mobile food units. Commissaries serving restricted conventional mobile food units must be licensed food establishments.
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** The following requirements apply to commissaries servicing unrestricted conventional mobile food units. Commissaries serving unrestricted conventional mobile food units must be licensed food establishments. An enclosed service building separated from all food preparation areas must be provided for supplying and maintaining unrestricted mobile food units. Potable water-servicing equipment must be stored and handled in a way that protects the water and equipment from contamination. The mobile food unit waste retention tank must be thoroughly flushed and drained during the servicing operation. All liquid waste must be discharged to a sanitary sewage disposal system in accordance with section 20.21.16 of the food code. The flushing and draining area for liquid wastes must be separate from the food preparation area and separate from the area used for loading and unloading food and supplies. This flushing and draining area must have at least overhead protection. Cleaning of the mobile food unit and in-place cleaning of nonfood-contact surfaces of equipment not requiring sanitization must be done with potable water and must be done in a manner which will not contaminate the vehicle's food storage or food preparation areas or equipment. If hoses are used in the cleaning process, they must be kept off the floor or pavement, on racks. All cleaning areas must be paved with a smooth surface of nonabsorbent material such as concrete or machine-laid asphalt, which is sloped to drain toward an approved catch basin or floor drain where the liquid waste can be disposed of in accord with the requirements of section 20.21.16, "Sewage." The unrestricted conventional mobile food unit operator must provide The Houston Health Department with an original, dated and signed letter from an approved commissary indicating that contractual arrangements have been made for servicing the unit. This letter must be dated within 30 days of the date the medallion is issued. Property owner's agreement and restroom availability letters from owners of the private property where the mobile food unit will operate must also be submitted. The restroom provided must be within 500 feet of the mobile unit and cannot be a portable toilet. No mobile food unit may operate within 100 feet of a portable toilet.
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** The following requirements apply to commissaries servicing restricted fixed location mobile food units. Commissaries servicing restricted fixed location mobile food units must provide an enclosed area separated from all food preparation areas for storage of the unit when not in use. This enclosed area must be used by the operator of the fixed location mobile food unit for storage of the unit when not in use. The restricted fixed location mobile food unit operator must provide the Houston Health Department with an original, dated and signed letter from an approved commissary indicating that contractual arrangements have been made for storage of supplies and storage of the unit when not in use. This letter must be dated within 30 days of the date the medallion is applied for.
- D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** The following requirements apply to commissaries servicing unrestricted fixed location mobile food units. The unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit operator must provide the Houston Health Department with an original, dated and signed letter from the licensed food establishment in which the proposed unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit will be located indicating that contractual arrangements have been made for servicing, supplying and for storage of the unit when not in use. This letter must be dated within 30 days of the date the medallion is applied for. Commissaries servicing unrestricted fixed location mobile food units must provide an enclosed service building or area separated from all food preparation areas for supplying and maintaining the unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit. This does not apply to fixed location mobile food units operating exclusively in an interior space of a retail shopping mall or similar structure if approved by the Health Department. Potable water-servicing equipment must be stored and handled in a way that protects the water and equipment from contamination. The mobile food unit waste retention tank must be thoroughly flushed and drained during the servicing operation. Alternate arrangements may be approved for fixed location mobile food units operating exclusively in an interior space of a retail shopping mall or similar structure. All liquid waste must be discharged to a sanitary sewage disposal system in accordance with section 20.21.16 of the food code. The flushing and draining area for liquid wastes must be separate from the food preparation area and separate from the area used for loading and unloading food and supplies. The servicing area must have at least overhead protection. Cleaning of the mobile food unit and in-place cleaning of nonfood-contact surfaces of equipment not requiring sanitization must be done with potable water and must be done in a manner which will not contaminate the unit's food storage or food preparation areas or equipment. If hoses are used in the cleaning process, they must be kept off the floor or pavement, on racks. All cleaning areas must be paved with a smooth surface of nonabsorbent material such as concrete or machine-laid asphalt, which is sloped to drain toward an approved catch basin or floor drain where the liquid waste can be disposed of in accordance with the requirements of section 20.21.16, "Sewage." Notwithstanding any alternatives that may be approved for servicing and supplying of an unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit, an enclosed area must be used by the operator of the unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit for storage of the unit when not in use.

#### IV. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS GENERALLY.

All new (new to Houston) operations for unrestricted mobile food units require complete review of plans and specifications. Restricted conventional mobile food unit operations do not require review of plans and specifications. Restricted fixed location mobile food units must submit minimal plans or a statement of compliance with section V (C) of this document. Changes of ownership or changes to an existing unrestricted mobile food unit may require review of plans and specifications. The plan review fee is **\$35.00 per submission**. Plans are submitted to the Houston Health Department at 8000 North Stadium Drive between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, holidays excepted. Your plans will be reviewed and either approved or rejected within seven days. The receptionist will notify you that the review is complete and your plans may be picked up. Plans may not be faxed back to you. Plans that are not approved will include a list of deficiencies that must be corrected before the plans are resubmitted for review. Unrestricted mobile food units cannot be inspected until plans are approved. Plans must include the following statement:

**"NO CHANGES MAY BE MADE WITHOUT PRIOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPROVAL"**

This means any changes in ownership, menu or commissary must be submitted to the Houston Health Department for prior approval.

- A. Ownership Information.** On your plans indicate the business name to be placed on the mobile food unit, the owner's name, mailing address and phone number.
- B. Menu.** Unrestricted units and all fixed location units must provide a list all food and beverages to be served. This list must include the source of all potentially hazardous foods and how they are stored, when and where prepared and how packaged or held. This menu must also describe how all food items are dispensed. After a menu is approved, any menu changes require Houston Health Department approval. **All food items used or sold must be from an approved source. Use of food prepared in unapproved kitchens or at a private residence (home) is not allowed.**

- C. **Design of Unit.** Basic design of the unit is up to the owner. A scale drawing (floor plan) describing all equipment and showing all service openings, windows and doors is required. Elevations are helpful (front and side views). Specify all equipment on the unit, such as cooking equipment, refrigerators, vent hoods, plumbing fixtures, pumps, tanks, water heaters, etc. Include specification sheets for all custom made or fabricated equipment. Note surface finishes on the plan for counters, cabinets and tables. All surfaces must be easily cleanable, smooth and free of breaks, open seams, cracks, chips, pits and similar imperfections and free of difficult-to-clean internal corners and crevices. Sink compartments must have rounded internal angles and be free of sharp corners or crevices. Include a finish schedule for floors, walls and ceilings. Walls and ceilings must be light-colored, smooth, nonabsorbent and easily cleanable. Floors must be constructed of smooth, durable materials.
- D. **Standard Operating Procedures.** A written standard operating procedure for each unrestricted mobile food unit must be submitted along with your plans that includes provisions for the mobile food unit's servicing operation details. You are encouraged to complete and submit the form provided in appendix B of this document as your standard operating procedure.

## V. SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS BY MOBILE FOOD SERVICE CLASSIFICATIONS.

A. **Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Restricted conventional mobile food units are not required to submit plans and specifications.

B. **Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** The following must be detailed on **two copies** of plans and specifications submitted for review:

1. Plans must be drawn to scale and must include a floor plan, plumbing diagram, finish schedule and equipment details. All plans, specifications and details must be submitted in English. Details may also be provided in a second language, if desired.
2. Include a finish schedule for the floors, walls and ceilings including material, finish and color.
3. Provide information on material and finish used for food preparation surfaces, counters and cabinets.
4. The business name must be permanently affixed on two sides of the unit with lettering no less than 3 inches in height. Indicate the business name, the owner/operator and mailing address on the plans.
5. Provide a covered garbage container of at least 20 gallons capacity attached to the unit for patron use.
6. All walls and ceilings must be smooth, easily cleanable and light in color with no exposed utility lines, piping, conduits or wiring.
7. Include a diagram of the plumbing system including all tanks, pumps, fixtures and piping. Hot and cold running water under pressure is required. Indicate the size and type of material used for the water supply piping. Indicate the location of a water pump with a pressure switch installed in the water supply system. Gravity systems are not acceptable. Air pressurized water systems must include a food grade onboard air pump. If located within the food preparation area, the fresh water tank must be enclosed in an accessible cabinet or other smooth easily cleanable structure.
8. The minimum size of the fresh water tank is 30 gallons, however additional capacity may be required if a three-compartment sink rather than a two-compartment sink is installed. The fresh water tank must be constructed of a food grade material. (National Sanitation Foundation certified or equal). If the fresh water tank is designed with an access port for inspection and cleaning, the port opening must be in the top of the tank and flanged upwards at least 1/2 inch and the cover assembly must be provided with a gasket, a device for securing the cover in place and be flanged to overlap the tank opening. Show the location of fresh water inlet **exterior to unit**. The fresh water inlet must be **3/4 inch in diameter or less**. The fresh water inlet must be protected from contamination and be of a size and type that will prevent its use for any other purpose. The water tank must be sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank. The water tank vent, if provided, must terminate in a downward direction and be provided with a protective filter or screened if the termination is in an interior space.
9. A utensil-washing sink is required. A two-compartment sink is required, however at three-compartment sink is recommended. Each compartment of the utensil-washing sink must be at least 15"x15"x 12"deep. Sink compartments must have rounded internal angles and be free of sharp corners or crevices.
10. A hand sink separated from the 2 or 3 compartment sink is required.
11. If located within the food preparation area, the water heater must be enclosed in an accessible cabinet or other smooth easily cleanable structure.
12. The wastewater tank must be at least 35 gallons or 115% of the capacity of the fresh water tank whichever is greater. The wastewater tank must be constructed of a durable material. Indicate what size and type of material is used for the wastewater drain and vent piping. An atmospheric vent to the outside must be provided from the top of the wastewater tank. Drains at sinks must be provided with "P" traps. "S" type traps are not acceptable. The wastewater tank must be sloped to the drain. The wastewater tank must be capable of being completely drained during servicing. The drain outlet must be larger than any other piping in the waste system.
13. Indicate how electricity will be provided (generator or plug-in at site).
14. Show all lighting on floor plan. Lighting must be shielded to protect against breakage.
15. A commercial grade vent hood with removable filters and sufficient mechanical ventilation to the outside is required over any grille, stove, range or fryer. Ventilation must be adequate for the equipment being vented. Hoods must be designed so as to ventilate all excessive heat, steam condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes. The design of the hood must be such that air currents created by the exhaust system will capture the contaminants and transport them directly to the exhaust duct. A canopy type hood must be installed directly above each appliance. The inside edge of the canopy hood must overhang or extend a horizontal distance of not less than 6 inches beyond the edge of the cooking surface on all open sides of the appliance, or greater than the top horizontal surface of the appliance. Hoods must be stainless steel and have a metal thickness of not less than 0.030 inch or 22 gauge. Edges of hoods must be rounded. The vertical distance between the lip of the hood and the cooking surface can not exceed 48 inches. All cooking hoods must exhaust through the hood a minimum quantity of air to be 100A (where A is the horizontal surface area of the hood in square feet), but not less than 300 cubic feet per minute (cfm) per lineal foot of cooking equipment. It is the mobile food unit operator's responsibility to provide any requested documentation pertaining to required airflow. Hoods must be equipped with approved grease filters designed for the specific purpose. Grease-collecting equipment must be accessible for cleaning. Filters must be installed at an angle greater than 45 degrees from the horizontal and must be equipped with a drip tray beneath the lower edge of the filters. Any horizontal or difficult to clean space above the vent hood must be closed in.
16. All openings to the outside, including serving openings and entrance doors must be screened or kept closed. Screening must be at least 16 mesh/inch.
17. Plans must include the following statement:

**"NO CHANGES MAY BE MADE WITHOUT PRIOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPROVAL"**

C. **Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Restricted fixed location mobile food units are not required to submit detailed plans and specifications. However a minimal set of plans or a statement of compliance that indicates the following is required:

1. A unit cannot exceed four feet in width, eight feet in length and eight feet in height including the unit's shade umbrella or roof if provided. The unit must be easily movable, controllable, and maneuverable by one person when the unit is fully loaded. A unit must have at least two operable rubber or rubber-like wheels which are less than eight inches in diameter. The bottom of the unit must be at least one foot from the ground. The unit cannot be motorized.

2. Each unit must have ample space available on the sides of the unit to display the prices of food, the name and street address of the vendor, and the medallion.
3. Each unit must have a litter receptacle attached to the unit available, clearly marked and maintained for patron use. This litter receptacle must be at least of a twenty-gallon capacity and must be composed of a leak-proof, nonabsorbent material.
4. The interior of the unit must be equipped with cabinets or compartments. All food contact surfaces must be smooth, easily accessible and cleanable. Units that will dispense non-potentially hazardous beverages must be equipped to do so from a closed system or bulk dispensing units or to distribute packaged beverages.

**D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Unrestricted fixed location mobile food units are limited to serving only items such as coffee, beverages and non-potentially hazardous foods with limited food preparation; i.e., roasted corn, fresh squeezed high acid juices, hot dogs, snow cones, etc. No extensive preparation of potentially hazardous food is allowed on an unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit. An exemption exists for hot dogs and for espresso carts for the preparation of milk. The following must be detailed on two copies of plans and specifications submitted for review:

1. Include a finish schedule for the sides, counters and interior spaces including material, finish and color. Provide information on material and finish used for food preparation surfaces, counters and cabinets.
2. The business name of the vendor must be permanently affixed on two sides of the unit with lettering no less than 3 inches in height. Each unit must have ample space available on the sides of the unit to display the prices of food, the name and street address of the vendor, and the medallion.
3. Include a diagram of the plumbing system including all tanks, pumps, fixtures and piping. Hot and cold running water under pressure is required. Include the size and type of material that is used for the water supply piping. The minimum size of the fresh water tank is 5 gallons.
4. A utensil-washing sink is required. A two-compartment sink is required, however a three-compartment sink is recommended. Each compartment of this sink must be adequate to fully immerse the largest utensil used on the unit. Sink compartments must have rounded internal angles and be free of sharp corners or crevices. The fresh water tank must be constructed of a food grade material. (National Sanitation Foundation certified or equal).
5. Provide a hand sink separated from the 2 or 3 compartment sink.
6. Show the location of a water pump with a pressure switch installed in the water supply system. Gravity systems are not acceptable. Air pressurized water systems must include a food grade onboard air pump.
7. Show the location of the fresh water inlet on the unit. The fresh water inlet must be 3/4 inch in diameter or less. The fresh water inlet must be protected from contamination and be of a size and type that will prevent its use for any other purpose. The water tank must be sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank. The water tank vent, if provided, must terminate in a downward direction and be provided with a protective filter or screened if the termination is in an interior space.
8. The wastewater tank must be permanently installed and constructed of a durable material. Indicate the size and type of material that is used for the wastewater drain and vent piping. Provide an atmospheric vent to the outside from the top of the wastewater tank. The wastewater tank must be sloped to the drain. The wastewater tank must be capable of being completely drained during servicing. The drain outlet must be larger than any other piping in the waste system. The wastewater tank must be at least 6 gallons or 115% of the capacity of the fresh water tank whichever is greater.
9. A unit cannot exceed four feet in width, eight feet in length and eight feet in height including the unit's shade umbrella or roof if provided. The unit must be easily movable, controllable, and maneuverable by one person when the unit is fully loaded. A unit must have at least two operable rubber or rubber-like wheels which are less than eight inches in diameter. The bottom of the unit must be at least one foot from the ground. The unit cannot be motorized.
10. Each unit must have a litter receptacle attached to the unit available, clearly marked and maintained for patron use. This litter receptacle must be at least of a twenty-gallon capacity and must be composed of a leak-proof, nonabsorbent material.
11. The interior of the unit must be equipped with cabinets or compartments. All food contact surfaces must be smooth, easily accessible and cleanable. Units that will dispense non-potentially hazardous beverages must be equipped to do so from a closed system or bulk dispensing units or to distribute packaged beverages.
12. Plans must include the following statement:

**"NO CHANGES MAY BE MADE WITHOUT PRIOR HOUSTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPROVAL"**

## **VI. ROUTE LISTS, ITINERARIES AND SITE LOCATIONS.**

**A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Restricted conventional mobile food units are not required to provide route lists or itineraries.

**B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** At the time the medallion is issued the operator of an unrestricted conventional mobile food unit must submit to the department a list of locations where the unit will be in operation. The mobile unit operator must also give written notice 2 business days prior to any location being added to the list of locations where the unit will be in operation.

**C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Restricted fixed location units must have an exact location for their operation. A site map must be provided that shows the unit location in relationship to streets, buildings, etc. The site map must also show the distance from the operation location to the commissary service and storage area. The Houston Health Department must approve any change in location.

**D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Unrestricted fixed location units must have an exact location for their operation. A site map must be provided that shows the unit location in relationship to streets, buildings, etc. The site map must also show the distance from the operation location to the commissary service and storage area. The Houston Health Department must approve any change in location.

## **VII. INSPECTIONS.**

All new mobile food units must pass an inspection before an invoice for a medallion is issued. In order to pass inspection, the unit must be fully operational, with all water tanks filled but not stocked with food supplies. If electricity is required to power water pumps, heaters or other equipment, the operator must provide a generator. No electrical power is available for mobile food units at the Houston Health Department office. Inspections of mobile food units are conducted at the Houston Health Department offices at 7411 Park Place Blvd. Inspections are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM only. Units arriving after 10:00 AM will not be inspected. Under some circumstances the Houston Health Department may require that the operator of a mobile food unit bring the unit to the Houston Health Department for a routine or re-inspection. Once inspected, approved mobile food units are routinely inspected at operational locations. The following specific requirements apply to each of the four types of mobile food units.

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Inspections of restricted conventional mobile food units are conducted at the Houston Health Department offices at 7411 Park Place Blvd. Inspections are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM only. Units arriving after 10:00 AM will not be inspected.
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** After all plans and specifications, standard operating procedures and menus are approved, unrestricted conventional mobile food units may be inspected. Inspections of unrestricted mobile food units are conducted at the Houston Health Department offices at 7411 Park Place Blvd. Inspections are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM only. Units arriving after 10:00 AM will not be inspected.
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Inspections of new restricted fixed location mobile food units are conducted on an appointment basis after all medallions are paid for and any required plans and specifications are approved and the site plan, standard operating procedures and menus have been approved. Please call the Houston Health Department at least three work days in advance to schedule a pre-opening inspection at your location. At the time of this inspection, the commissary will also be inspected to determine compliance.
- D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Inspections of new unrestricted fixed location mobile food units are conducted on an appointment basis after all medallions are paid for and the plans and specifications, the site plan, standard operating procedures and menus have been approved. Please call the Houston Health Department at least three work days in advance to schedule a pre-opening inspection at your location. At the time of this inspection, the commissary will also be inspected to determine compliance.

## **VIII. WHAT TO BRING WHEN YOUR NEW MOBILE FOOD UNIT IS INSPECTED.**

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**
  - 1. Current proof of insurance (motor vehicles and trailers only)
  - 2. Current Texas Driver's License (motor vehicles and trailers only)
  - 3. Current vehicle registration (motor vehicles and trailers only)
  - 4. Current safety inspection (motor vehicles only)
  - 5. **\$310.00** for the medallion
  - 6. Valid Sales Tax Permit (available at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxpermit>)
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**
  - 1. Current proof of insurance (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  - 2. Current Texas Driver's License (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  - 3. Current vehicle registration (motor vehicles, trailers and towing vehicles only)
  - 4. Current safety inspection (motor vehicles and trailers over 4500 lbs)
  - 5. Valid Sales Tax Permit issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (available at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxpermit>)
  - 6. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use
  - 7. An initial route list or itinerary
  - 8. Approved standard operating procedures
  - 9. Approved menu
  - 10. Approved plans and specifications
  - 11. Written and notarized property agreement and documentation of the availability of restrooms for the mobile food unit operator and employee's use.
  - 12. **\$310.00** for the medallion
  - 13. **\$200.00** for the electronic monitoring system fee
  - 14. **\$50.00 for the pre-opening inspection fee**
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**
  - 1. An approved site plan
  - 2. An approved menu
  - 3. Approved plans or a statement of compliance with section 20.21(j) regarding size limitations and other requirements
  - 4. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use
  - 5. **\$310.00** for the medallion
- D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**
  - 1. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use
  - 2. Approved plans and specifications
  - 3. Approved standard operating procedures
  - 4. Approved menu
  - 5. An approved site plan
  - 6. **\$310.00** for the medallion

## **IX. MOBILE FOOD UNIT OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.**

Mobile food units must comply with all applicable laws, and in addition mobile food units must comply with the requirements of section 20.21.1-28 of the food code regarding food protection and handling, employee practices, equipment cleaning and sanitation and establishment sanitation. The Houston Health Department may impose additional requirements when necessary. The Houston Health Department may also limit or prohibit the sale of some or all potentially hazardous foods. Mobile food units shall provide only single-service articles for use by the consumer. The operator of a mobile food unit must serve, store and display food and beverages on or in the mobile food unit itself and cannot not attach, set up or use any other device or equipment intended to increase the selling, serving or display capacity of the mobile food unit including but not limited to counters, counter extensions, tables, ice chests, freezers or refrigerators. The operator of a mobile food unit shall not provide any dining area within 100 feet for the customers of the mobile food unit. Utility connections, if any at a mobile food unit operational location, are limited to quick-connect electrical and telephone services. Utility connections for water,

sewerage and gas are prohibited. All awnings or coverings must be attached to and solely supported by the mobile food unit. Trucks exclusively selling ice cream products on city streets must provide additional signage and lights

## **X. RENEWING YOUR MOBILE FOOD UNIT MEDALLION.**

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Operators of restricted conventional mobile food units are required to maintain an individual medallion for each restricted conventional mobile food unit. A renewal invoice will be mailed to you 30 days prior to expiration of your medallion. This payment cannot be mailed to the Houston Health Department. You must bring the unit in for inspection and renewal of the medallion. In the event that you do not receive a renewal invoice, usually because of a change of address, bring the unit to the Houston Health Department for inspection. It is your responsibility to renew this medallion prior to expiration. Inspections of mobile food units are conducted at the Houston Health Department offices at 7411 Park Place Blvd. Inspections are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM only. Units arriving after 10:00 AM will not be inspected.
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.** Operators of unrestricted conventional mobile food units are required to maintain an individual medallion for each unrestricted conventional mobile food unit. A renewal invoice will be mailed to you 30 days prior to expiration of your medallion. This payment cannot be mailed to the Houston Health Department. You must bring the unit in for inspection and renewal of the medallion. In the event that you do not receive a renewal invoice, usually because of a change of address, bring the unit to the Houston Health Department for inspection. It is your responsibility to renew this medallion prior to expiration. Inspections of unrestricted conventional mobile food units are conducted at the Houston Health Department offices at 7411 Park Place Blvd. Inspections are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM only. Units arriving after 10:00 AM will not be inspected. Trucks exclusively serving ice cream products on city streets must provide additional signage and lights.
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Operators of restricted fixed location mobile food units are required to maintain an individual medallion for each restricted fixed location mobile food unit. A renewal invoice will be mailed to you 30 days prior to expiration of your medallion. This payment may be mailed to the Houston Health Department. Once processed, an inspector will visit your location to inspect your unit and affix the new medallion to the mobile food unit. In the event that you do not receive a renewal invoice, usually because of a change of address, please contact the Houston Health Department to arrange to receive another copy of the renewal invoice. It is your responsibility to renew this medallion prior to expiration.
- D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.** Operators of unrestricted fixed location mobile food units are required to maintain an individual medallion for each unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit. A renewal invoice will be mailed to you 30 days prior to expiration of your medallion. This payment may be mailed to the Houston Health Department. Once processed, an inspector will visit your location to inspect your unit and affix the new medallion on the mobile food unit. In the event that you do not receive a renewal invoice, usually because of a change of address, please contact the Houston Health Department to arrange to receive another copy of the renewal invoice. It is your responsibility to renew this medallion prior to expiration.

## **XI. WHAT TO BRING, HAVE WITH YOU OR INCLUDE WHEN RENEWING YOUR MEDALLION.**

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**
1. Current proof of insurance (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  2. Current Texas Driver's License (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  3. Current vehicle registration (motor vehicles and trailers only)
  4. Current safety inspection (motor vehicles only)
  5. **\$310.00** for the medallion
  6. Valid Sales Tax Permit issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (available at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxpermit>)
- B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**
1. Current proof of insurance (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  2. Current Texas Driver's License (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  3. Current vehicle registration (motor vehicles and towing vehicles only)
  4. Current safety inspection (motor vehicles and trailers over 4500 lbs)
  5. Valid Sales Tax Permit issued by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (available at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxpermit>)
  6. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use.
  7. Service tickets from an approved commissary verifying that the unit has been properly serviced for the previous year.
  8. Approved standard operating procedures or an affidavit stating that previously approved standard operating procedures continue in effect.
  9. A current route list or itinerary with signed and notarized property owner's permission.
  10. Written and notarized property agreement and documentation of the availability of restrooms for the mobile food unit operator and employee's use.
  11. **\$310.00** for the medallion
  12. **\$200** for the electronic monitoring service fee
- C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**
1. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use
  2. **\$310.00** for the medallion
- E. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**
1. An original signed letter from an approved commissary dated within the last 30 days authorizing use.
  2. Approved standard operating procedures or an affidavit stating that previously approved standard operating procedures continue in effect.
  3. **\$310.00** for the medallion

## **XII. CHANGING OWNERS, MENUS OR REMODELING.**

- A. Restricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**
1. If you purchase a permitted restricted conventional mobile food unit, you must obtain a new medallion for it prior to beginning operations. To obtain a new medallion in your name, follow the instructions in section VII and VIII of this document for restricted conventional mobile food units.
  2. If you change your menu on a restricted conventional mobile food unit, you are not required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department unless the menu change also changes the unit from restricted to unrestricted.

3. If you remodel your restricted conventional mobile food unit, you are not required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department unless the remodeling also changes the unit from restricted to unrestricted.

**B. Unrestricted Conventional Mobile Food Units.**

1. If you purchase a permitted unrestricted conventional mobile food unit, you must submit a description of your menu and a document describing your standard operating procedures as described in section IV of this document. Plans and specifications may be required if it cannot be determined that plans and specifications already exist in our files. To obtain a medallion in your name, follow in instructions in section VII, VIII and IX of this document.
2. If you change your menu on an unrestricted conventional mobile food unit, you are required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department as described in section IV of this document.
3. If you remodel your unrestricted conventional mobile food unit, you are required to submit new plans and specifications to the Houston Health Department as described in sections IV and V of this document.

**C. Restricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**

1. If you purchase a permitted restricted fixed location mobile food unit, you must submit a description of your menu as described in section IV of this document. To obtain a new medallion in your name, follow in instructions in section VII and VIII of this document for restricted fixed location mobile food units.
2. If you change your menu on a restricted fixed location mobile food unit; you are required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department as described in section IV of this document.
3. If you remodel your restricted fixed location mobile food unit, you are not required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department unless the remodeling also changes the unit from restricted to unrestricted or alters the configuration or size of the unit.

**D. Unrestricted Fixed Location Mobile Food Units.**

1. If you purchase a permitted unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit, you must submit a description of your menu and a document describing your standard operating procedures as described in section IV of this document. Plans and specifications may be required if it cannot be determined that plans and specifications already exist in our files. To obtain a new medallion in your name, follow in instructions in section VII, VIII and IX of this document.
2. If you change your menu on an unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit; you are required to submit this change to the Houston Health Department as described in section IV of this document.
3. If you remodel your unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit, you are required to submit new plans and specifications to the Houston Health Department as described in sections IV and V of this document.

### **XIII. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ICE CREAM ONLY TRUCKS, TRICYCLES AND CARTS.**

- A. A person may sell ice cream products upon a street or right of way from a restricted conventional mobile food unit that has a current medallion provided that;
- B. The ice cream products are fully wrapped, enclosed and contained in individual wrappers or containers, and;
- C. The driver of the vehicle drives to the side of the street, as close as practicable to the curb or edge of the paved portion of the street before making a sale, and;
- D. The vehicle remains stopped, standing or parked only as long as necessary to make the immediate sale, and;
- E. Any truck used to sell packaged ice cream products in this manner must be equipped with a sign clearly visible from both the front and rear bearing the warning "CAUTION—CHILDREN", and;
- F. The lettering for this sign must be six inch black block style on a yellow background, and;
- G. Flasher-type warning lights displaying yellow to the front and red to the rear must be installed at each end of the sign.
- H. Additionally, packaged ice cream products may be sold upon the sidewalks from non-motorized pushcarts. These carts are licensed as restricted conventional mobile food units.
- I. The operator of a vehicle selling ice cream products upon the street, right of way or sidewalk may not operate within a school zone during the times that a reduced speed limit is applicable.

### **XIV. FOOD MANAGER'S CLASS.**

During all hours of operation, one person on duty at each unrestricted mobile food unit including an unrestricted fixed location mobile food unit must be certified by the Houston Health Department. This program has as its primary goal the training of employees in safe food handling practices, including knowledge of the food code. This special course of training for employees is regularly offered by the Houston Health Department in several languages. The fee for this class is **\$70.00**. Please call the Houston Health Department to schedule one or more of your employees for this class prior to beginning operations. This course of training is not required for the operation of restricted mobile food units.